

Appl. No. 09/889,484
Amendment dated February 19, 2004
Reply to Office Action of August 19, 2004

The following Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for drying substrates ~~is a method which houses substrates (1) within a processing container (3), and dries a surface of each substrate (1) by relatively, comprising;~~

~~housing substrates within a processing container that contains a cleaning fluid;~~

~~lowering a fluid face of the cleaning fluid (2) within [[a]] the processing container (3) with respect to the substrates; (1) and by introducing the drying fluid within the processing container (3), the method comprising the steps of;~~

~~Introducing introducing a drying fluid under a liquid condition within the processing container (3), and~~

~~Injecting injecting the introduced drying fluid onto the fluid face of the cleaning fluid (2) using a nozzle (5).~~

2. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method for drying substrates as set forth in claim 1, further comprising

~~the step of blowing inert gas onto the injected drying fluid for atomizing the injected drying fluid.~~

3. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method for drying substrates as set forth in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein

the introducing of the drying fluid within the processing container (3) is carried out intermittently.

4. (Currently Amended) A device for drying substrates ~~is a device which houses substrates (1) within a processing container (3), and dries a surface of each substrate (1) by relatively lowering a fluid face of cleaning fluid (2) within a processing container (3) with~~

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respect to the substrates (1) and by introducing the drying fluid within the processing container (3), the device comprising[();]:

a processing container configured to contain a cleaning fluid, house substrates and lower a fluid face of the cleaning fluid within the processing container with respect to the substrates; and

Drying drying fluid supplying means (4)(4a)(5) for introducing a drying fluid under a liquid condition within the processing container (3), and for injecting the introduced drying fluid onto the fluid face of the cleaning fluid (2) using a nozzle (5).

5. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The device for drying substrates as set forth in claim 4, further comprising

blowing means (6) for blowing inert gas onto the injected drying fluid for atomizing the injected drying fluid, the blowing means (6) being near the drying fluid supplying means (5).

6. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The device for drying substrates as set forth in claim 4 or claim 5, further comprising

control means (8) for controlling the drying fluid supplying means (4a) so as to intermittently introduce the drying fluid within the processing container (3).

7. (Currently Amended) A method for drying substrates is a method which, comprising:

houses housing substrates (1) within a processing container (3) that contains a cleaning fluid; and dries a surface of each substrate (1) by relatively

lowering a fluid face of the cleaning fluid (2) within [a] the processing container (3) with respect to the substrates (1) and by introducing the drying fluid within the processing container (3), the method comprising the steps of;

Conveying conveying a liquid drying fluid to an exhaust opening (5e) of a nozzle (5) using a carrier gas, and Simultaneously simultaneously blowing the drying fluid and the carrier gas from the exhaust opening (5e) towards an upper the fluid face of the cleaning fluid (2).

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8. (Currently Amended) A device for drying substrates ~~is a device which houses substrates (1) within a processing container (3), and dries a surface of each substrate (1) by relatively lowering a fluid face of cleaning fluid (2) within a processing container (3) with respect to the substrate (1) and by introducing the drying fluid within the processing container (3), the device comprising[[:]]:~~

a processing container configured to contain a cleaning fluid, house substrates and lower a fluid face of the cleaning fluid within the processing container with respect to the substrates; and

Drying drying fluid supplying means (5)(5a)(5b)(5e) for conveying a liquid drying fluid to an exhaust opening (5e) of a nozzle (5) using a carrier gas, and for simultaneously blowing the drying fluid and the carrier gas from the exhaust opening (5e) towards an upper the fluid face of the cleaning fluid (2).

9. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The device for drying substrates as set forth in claim 8, wherein

the drying fluid supplying means (5)(5a)(5b)(5e) comprises a first feed pipe (5a) for supplying the carrier gas to the nozzle (5) and a second feed pipe (5b) for supplying the liquid drying fluid which is communicated to the halfway of the first feed pipe (5a).

10. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The device for drying substrates as set forth in claim 8, wherein

the drying fluid supplying means (5)(5a)(5b)(5e) comprises a first feed pipe (5a) for supplying the carrier gas to the nozzle (5) and a second feed pipe (5b) for supplying the liquid drying fluid to the nozzle (5), the first feed pipe (5a) and the second feed pipe (5b) being independently provided from one another.

11. (New) A device for drying substrates comprising:

a processing container configured to contain a cleaning fluid, house substrates and lower a fluid face of the cleaning fluid within the processing container with respect to the substrates; and

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a drying fluid supplying mechanism configured and arranged to introduce a drying fluid under a liquid condition within the processing container and inject the introduced drying fluid onto the fluid face of the cleaning fluid using a nozzle.

12. (New) The device for drying substrates as set forth in claim 11, further comprising

a blowing mechanism that is configured to blow inert gas onto the injected drying fluid to atomize the injected drying fluid, the blowing mechanism being near the drying fluid supplying mechanism.

13. (New) The device for drying substrates as set forth in claim 11, further comprising

a control mechanism configured to control the drying fluid supplying mechanism so as to intermittently introduce the drying fluid within the processing container.

14. (New) The device for drying substrates as set forth in claim 12, further comprising

a control mechanism configured to control the drying fluid supplying mechanism so as to intermittently introduce the drying fluid within the processing container.

15. (New) A device for drying substrates comprising:

a processing container configured to contain a cleaning fluid, house substrates and lower a fluid face of the cleaning fluid within the processing container with respect to the substrates; and

a drying fluid supplying mechanism configured and arranged to convey a liquid drying fluid to an exhaust opening of a nozzle using a carrier gas and simultaneously blow the drying fluid and the carrier gas from the exhaust opening towards the fluid face of the cleaning fluid.

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16. (New) The device for drying substrates as set forth in claim 15, wherein the drying fluid supplying mechanism comprises a first feed pipe configured and arranged to supply the carrier gas to the nozzle and a second feed pipe configured and arranged to supply the liquid drying fluid which is communicated to the first feed pipe.

17. (New) The device for drying substrate as set forth in claim 15, wherein the drying fluid supplying mechanism comprises a first feed pipe configured and arranged to supply the carrier gas to the nozzle and a second feed pipe configured and arranged to supply the liquid drying fluid to the nozzle, the first feed pipe and the second feed pipe being independent from one another.